

On, Friday, June 23, 2006, Fr. Tim Luschen, Alicia Forth, Ken Hughes, Nichole Lipps, Amanda Herrick, Nicole Owens, and Virginia Osgood, all members of the Steering Committee, traveled to Wichita, KS to meet with Dan Lougharan and Mike Wescott, both of the Catholic Diocese of Wichita (CDW). CDW has been practicing stewardship in all parishes and schools for the past twenty years. The following are thoughts and ideas that both gentlemen presented to the committee:

### **Daniel Loughman – Director of Stewardship for CDW**

- Mr. Loughman, who has been a very active participant in CDW for over 21 years, began by explaining that CDW was a stewardship diocese and had been operating in that mode since 1992. His parish, St. Francis of Assisi, had been operating as a stewardship parish twenty years prior to diocesan acceptance.
- He indicated the school would be a huge advantage both in faith nurturing, but also in parish numbers. But these blessings would not come without great sacrifices of time, talent, and certainly treasure. A school is another ministry of the parish.
- Loughman explained that the cost of a school is huge (~ half a parish budget) and that treasure is not the only aspect of stewardship that is critical when schools are established. Time and talent are critical; the use of aides, volunteers, tutors, homeroom parents, possibly janitors and many others are necessary.
- He explained that schools are definitely not free and the parishioners must determine if the sacrifice is worth it. Schools require that a strong foundation of stewardship be established. Without the “formation of hearts, minds and attitudes of parishioners, it likely won’t happen.” The burden cannot fall on parents alone; parishioners without school age children must offer continuous support just as if they had children in the parish school.
- There were, on occasion, capital fund drives (but no fundraising activities like auctions, benefits, etc.)
- Loughman believes that stewardship does not go anywhere unless the pastor leads from the pulpit. People must see the pastor as 100% supportive; otherwise parishioners may perceive the funding issues to be the agendas of certain individuals rather than that of a church as a whole.
- St Francis of Assisi began in 1970 (and now all Wichita parishes follow the theme) to use four pillars to build its stewardship foundation. Those pillars are hospitality, prayer, formation and service.
- Campaign week is a critical time and must be planned well in advance, far beyond four weeks prior to sign up. Nine months of preparation goes into each Wichita stewardship campaign.
- CDW has three phases in a stewardship campaign: Prepare, Renew and Follow-up.
- Mr. Loughman concluded by stating that parishioners need to be involved, the more involved and “in tune” members are, the more trust is built. Rotation on committees is critical because it gets more people involved. Involvement begets commitment. And, finally, “form each year for the next year.”

## **Mike Wescott**

- Mr. Wescott has six children, four of whom have graduated and two are still in attendance in CDW schools). He has a healthcare background, is the Director of Development for CDW since 2004, and has worked in the development office of CDW since 1991.
- Any parish considering a campaign should begin with a feasibility study to determine if the parish is ready for a development drive.
- When a community is a stewardship community, campaigns are directed at preparing people for sacrificial giving beyond the normal general fund (Sunday collections). Campaign donations come from “beyond” regular tithing – accumulated gifts, appreciated stocks, etc.
- Paying off an old debt is not nearly as popular as building a new building or starting a new project. Sometimes temporary facilities would serve as a driving force or incentive for a campaign.
- An effort to raise funds that is not called a fundraiser would be a dinner that could be held to highlight and honor diocesan seminarians. Participants are charged \$25 per head and many people give over the plate charge. Eventually a very large amount would be raised and no “fund raising” words are used.
- When asked how new parishioners who have just moved into the diocese are oriented to the stewardship philosophy, Wescott offered two suggestions. One being, the parish stewardship director could walk newcomers through the stewardship philosophy and plan and two, concentrated focus on a stewardship fair.
- A well-planned parish survey could also assess parish attitude before a campaign is initiated. These parish surveys could include questions and comments on topics such as information and communication, perception of parish finance, parish service, prayer and life, adult education, stewardship, pastoral ministries, demographics, and three sections related to school information.
- In his parish there are about 600 students enrolled in the Catholic school, about 60% of the children within the parish attend the parish school which includes at least two classrooms per grade including Pre —K3 and 4 and Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. He further stated that Catholic education in Wichita is where it is today because stewardship is a way of life in CDW.
- He used the slogan “stewardship beyond boundaries” to sum up campaigning for parish and individual capital support.